

DD/O 75-4529

Executive Registry

75-36451

12 August 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Professor Kahin's Request for Release of Documents

REFERENCE: Memo for The Director from D/DCI/NIO, Dated 5 Aug 1975, Subject: Professor Kahin's Request

1. This memorandum contains a recommendation for your approval in paragraph 4.
2. I have reviewed the attached package from the Operations Directorate standpoint and have the following comment:
 - a. At a minimum I believe documents 85 d, 87 and 107 should be withheld in their entirety. To sanitize them would make them virtually meaningless.
 - b. On the larger issue of the remainder of these documents the position has been taken in the review process that the other documents representing interviews by you with various Vietnamese officials can be released because "the Government of which they speak no longer exists." I recommend a reexamination of this premise on the basis that these memoranda represent conversations obtained by you in confidence in your position as Chief, FE.
3. It is true that these documents cannot be denied on the basis that they will adversely affect the foreign relations of the United States. They have also been sanitized for routine mention of sources and methods and personnel and for derogatory allusions to other persons suggesting the information was imparted in confidence. I am troubled, however, by the release of these sanitized documents on the basis that they represent even

in this form information derived by you from Vietnamese Government officials under the assumption by these officials that their remarks were given in confidence and would not be made public. It seems to me that the confidentiality of conversations with CIA officials by foreign officials is the sine qua non of our ability to provide the President and the Intelligence Community with insights into situations in circumstances where these same foreign officials would not talk to Department of State or military officers.

4. We have been much concerned in the FOI business with the establishment of a precedent. I would hate to see us establish, by your action here, a precedent that information given in confidence by unpaid sources abroad^{is} to be published as soon as there is some kind of governmental or political change in the situation in the country where such conversations take place. If one assumes that the DCI was given the charge of protecting sources and methods, not because of any specific source or method, but because of the need to protect the trust of those reporting information to us then it seems to me that it is possible for you to deny the release of these memoranda to Professor Kahin on the basis of protecting sources. I recommend you do so.

William E. Nelson

William E. Nelson
Deputy Director for Operations

Attachment:
Referent Memorandum

() APPROVE () DISAPPROVE recommendation in paragraph 4.

See 12

W. E. Colby, DCI

Date

cc: DDCI
D/DCI/NIO
Exec Sec, IRC

WEN:pc (12 Aug 75)

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